

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL 44

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005

INTRODUCED BY

Ben Lujan

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING CERTAIN STATE AGENCIES TO STUDY WATER CONSERVATION AND WATER INFRASTRUCTURE FINANCING AND ADMINISTRATION TO DEVELOP A STRATEGIC WATER CONSERVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PLAN TO SECURE A SUSTAINABLE WATER SUPPLY FOR NEW MEXICO'S URBAN, RURAL, AGRICULTURAL, INDUSTRIAL, RECREATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL WATER NEEDS.

WHEREAS, New Mexico is a semiarid state with a finite supply of ground water, a variable supply of surface water and an annual average precipitation of thirteen inches; and

WHEREAS, ninety percent of New Mexicans rely on ground water for their drinking water supply, and many aquifers are being exhausted; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that the population of New Mexico will grow thirty-five percent in the next twenty-five years,

.155516.1

underscored material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

underscoring material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 which is the equivalent of the population of a city as big or
2 bigger than the city of Albuquerque; and

3 WHEREAS, the state water plan provides that the state
4 shall engage in a coordinated and concerted effort to promote
5 conservation and efficient use of water in all water use
6 sectors as one of the cornerstones of New Mexico's efforts to
7 meet the state's present and future water needs; and

8 WHEREAS, the state water plan recognizes that the public's
9 use of water for recreation and use of water for fish and
10 wildlife habitat restoration are important to the state's
11 quality of life and economic vitality; and

12 WHEREAS, it is estimated that there is a funding gap of
13 two billion dollars (\$2,000,000,000) in the financing of water
14 infrastructure to meet the needs of the state's citizens; and

15 WHEREAS, New Mexico will need to meet this funding gap
16 through a combination of local, state and federal funding
17 sources as well as public-private partnerships; and

18 WHEREAS, the state water plan provides that the state
19 should identify dedicated funding sources to leverage federal
20 and other funding to pay for water-related projects; and

21 WHEREAS, the state water plan provides that the state
22 shall identify, prioritize and fund water-related
23 infrastructure and management projects that protect the state's
24 water resources for New Mexico uses;

25 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE

.155516.1

underscoring material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 STATE OF NEW MEXICO that a water conservation and
2 infrastructure financing and administration task force be
3 created that is comprised of eighteen members and assisted by a
4 technical advisory team whose staff will be drawn from the
5 following state bodies: the department of finance and
6 administration, the New Mexico finance authority, the taxation
7 and revenue department, the department of environment, the
8 energy, minerals and natural resource department, the
9 department of game and fish, the office of the state engineer,
10 the interstate stream commission and the New Mexico department
11 of agriculture; and

12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist
13 of four members appointed by the governor, one of which the
14 governor shall designate as the chair of the task force; six
15 members of the legislature, of which three shall be appointed
16 by the speaker of the house of representatives and three shall
17 be appointed by the president pro tempore of the senate; and
18 eight members of the public, appointed by the New Mexico
19 legislative council, representing the following interests:
20 municipalities; counties; mutual domestic water consumer
21 associations; commercial irrigated agriculture; acequias;
22 Indian nations, tribes and pueblos; the environment; and
23 recreation; and

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall, in
25 consultation with the technical advisory team, gather and

.155516.1

underscoring material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 distill information, develop strategic options and adopt
2 recommendations for a strategic water conservation and
3 infrastructure financing and administration plan that will
4 promote the state's economy, natural resources and quality of
5 life. Specifically, the task force, in consultation with the
6 technical advisory team, shall:

7 A. evaluate the potential for water savings from
8 water conservation and efficiency improvements in New Mexico's
9 urban, agricultural and industrial sectors and watersheds; the
10 cost-effectiveness of water conservation and efficiency
11 improvements, including estimates of the unit cost of conserved
12 water; and additional benefits, such as mitigation of the
13 social and environmental impacts from development of new water
14 supplies using dams, pipelines and desalination;

15 B. identify and evaluate the pros and cons of
16 different funding mechanisms for a dedicated recurring state
17 fund for financing water conservation and infrastructure,
18 including a statewide water user fee, gross receipts tax,
19 income tax, property tax and public-private partnerships,
20 considering the equity issues associated with who pays and
21 bears the burden of water financing, how much each user pays in
22 proportion to use and the impacts of the funding mechanism on
23 water use and the state's economy;

24 C. evaluate how water rights for public use and
25 benefit, such as recreation, fish and wildlife habitat

.155516.1

underscoring material = new
[bracketed material] = delete

1 restoration, and compact obligations should be obtained, funded
2 and administered within the state; and

3 D. evaluate the need to coordinate, consolidate or
4 restructure the existing state funds for financing water
5 projects and the roles and responsibilities of the executive
6 and legislative branches in administering these funds,
7 considering the need to develop uniform criteria for evaluating
8 and prioritizing water projects and equity issues associated
9 with distribution of funds among water sectors, across basins
10 and between different water projects; and

11 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force submit a report
12 of its findings and policy recommendations to the governor and
13 legislature no later than December 1, 2006; and

14 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
15 transmitted to the governor, the speaker of the house of
16 representatives, the president pro tempore of the senate, the
17 New Mexico legislative council, the department of finance and
18 administration, the New Mexico finance authority, the
19 department of taxation and revenue, the department of
20 environment, the energy, minerals and natural resource
21 department, the department of game and fish, the office of the
22 state engineer, the interstate stream commission and the New
23 Mexico department of agriculture.